Serving the Nation for 50 Years . . .

Now a part of the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory has been managed by the University of California since its inception. For 50 years, national security has been the Laboratory's important defining mission. Researchers today continue the multidisciplinary team-science tradition of founder E. O. Lawrence (at left) and the commitment of first director Herbert York and his team to be a "new ideas" laboratory.

Herbert F. York
(1952–1958)

Selected by E. O. Lawrence to head the new laboratory, York faced the challenges of planning Livermore's technical programs and recruiting its staff. During his years as director, the staff grew from around 100 to some 3,600, and the annual budget increased from $3.5 million to $45 million.

Edward Teller
(1958–1960)

The efforts of Teller and E. O. Lawrence led to the founding of the Laboratory. Teller served as director while the Laboratory developed the Polaris missile warhead—its first triumphant success—and the nation entered into an international nuclear test moratorium.

Harold Brown
(1960–1961)

Serving as director during the nuclear test moratorium, Brown was a driving force behind the acquisition of new nonnuclear experimental facilities and further expansion of Livermore's already impressive capabilities for simulating nuclear explosions on computers.

John S. Foster
(1961–1965)

With the end of the moratorium, nuclear testing resumed—all underground after 1962. Under Foster's tenure, nuclear designs improved in terms of safety and security as well as performance. The Laboratory also established a biomedical program and an on-site branch of UC Davis.

Michael M. May
(1965–1971)

While May served as director, warheads for the Poseidon, Spartan, and Minuteman missiles were developed. Project Plowshare, which was winding down, laid the foundation for energy-related and environmental programs. In 1971, the Laser Program was established and grew rapidly.

Roger E. Batzel
(1971–1988)

Batzel served as director for more than one-third of Livermore's history. In the 1970s, work in energy, environment, and fusion grew to over half the Laboratory's budget. In the 1980s, weapons development and defense work regained preeminence, and bioscience and laser research blossomed.

John H. Nuckolls
(1988–1994)

The Laboratory began a transition to the post–Cold War era. Nuckolls established the Nonproliferation, Arms Control, and International Security directorate, and the foundation was laid for the Stockpile Stewardship Program to maintain weapons in the absence of nuclear testing.

C. Bruce Tarter
(1994–2002)

The Stockpile Stewardship Program began, and Livermore acquired vastly improved capabilities—terascale computers and NIF. Programs to counter proliferation and terrorism grew and are contributing to post–September 11 national security. Tarter plans to step down as director in 2002.

. . . As a Part of the University of California

In January 2001, the Regents of the University of California approved an extension of the contract with DOE to manage Livermore and Los Alamos national laboratories. The University manages the two laboratories and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory as a public service to the nation. When the performance-based management contract was extended to September 30, 2005, UC created the position of Vice President for Laboratory Management. In May, John P. McTague was selected to serve.

Livermore's association with UC helps to ensure scientific and technical excellence, and it serves as a vehicle for recruiting new employees. As the Laboratory began operation, many of the founding scientists and engineers were recruited from Berkeley. Now, many strong ties connect Livermore and UC campuses. UC Davis Department of Applied Science has had a branch at the Livermore site since the 1960s, and the Laboratory is working closely with UC to establish research programs at the University's newest campus at Merced. In addition, Livermore has five research institutes, where students and faculty from UC and elsewhere work collaboratively with Laboratory researchers. Programs, supported by the fee UC receives for managing the laboratories, include cooperative research efforts between the UC laboratories and campuses to address issues that are important to the State of California.